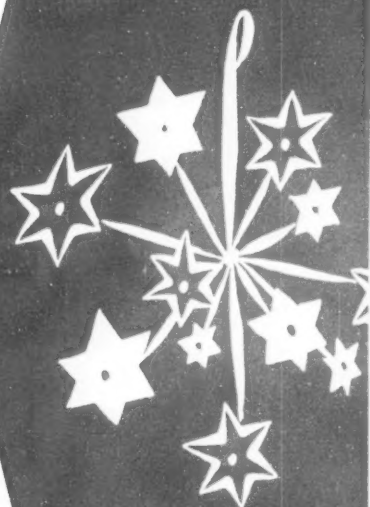
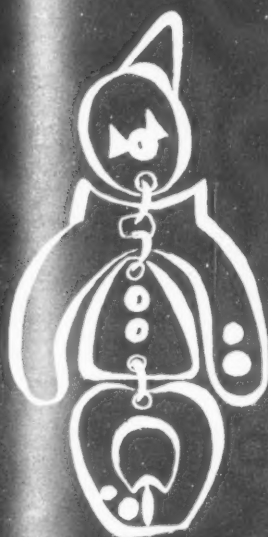


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NOVEMBER 1955 • 50¢



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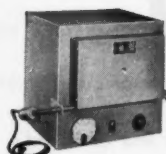


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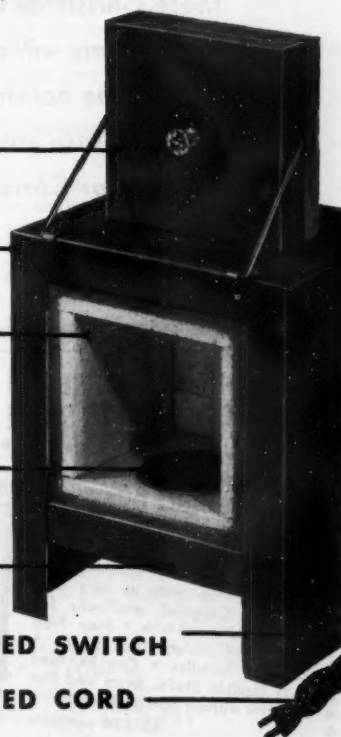
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Ceramics MONTHLY

Volume 3, Number 11

NOVEMBER • 1955

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for the Holiday Season

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Cover by Robert L. Creager

Ceramics Monthly is published each month at the Lawhead Press, Inc., Athens, Ohio, by Professional Publications, Inc., S. L. Davis, Pres. and Treas.; L. G. Farber, V. Pres.; P. S. Emery, Secy.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE in U.S.A. and Possessions: one year, \$4; two years, \$7; three years, \$9. Canada and Pan Am. add 50 cents a year; foreign, add \$1 a year. Current issues, 50c; back issues, 60c.

ALL CORRESPONDENCE (advertising, subscriptions, editorial) should be sent to the editorial offices at 4175 N. High St., Columbus 14, Ohio. Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Athens, Ohio, as granted under Authority of the Act of March 3, 1879.

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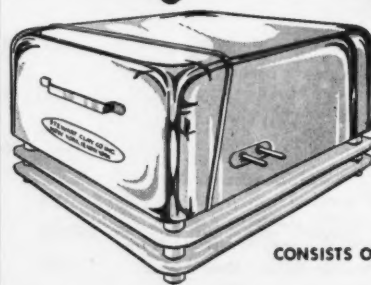
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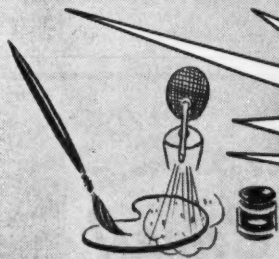
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MURIEL D. LICKEL, Director
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♦ The book should prove helpful—and for only 65 cents.—Ed.

DARKNESS IN ENAMELS?

Gentlemen:

. . . Your publication has, to my disappointment, slipped from its high standards until it is now not much better than the average "artsy-craftsy" home putterers ceramic publication . . .

Sir, there are innumerable publications depicting the making of a true-to-life rose, etc., but what is there for the sincere craftsman—especially for enamellists? The amount of literature about enameling, and

generally available, is small and of dubious quality. Anyone who has worked hard for even a few months can see that your correspondents are as much in the dark about [enamels] as most of the authors who have written their "fun and profit" tomes . . .

. . . Nearly two years ago I became . . . obsessed with making my own enamels . . . I hereby submit one vote for a series of articles on the compounding of enamels, partly in the hope of your magazine having more success than I have had in obtaining information from the large supply houses. My letters [to them] have generally gone unanswered. [And] what about articles on manipulating copper and silver similar to the throwing and mold-making series which are very interesting; fabricating an object from two or more shapes; . . . enameling kilns; . . .

I would welcome correspondence with anyone trying to compound enamels . . .

LAWRENCE STEPHENS
Sierra Madre, Calif.

♦ "Home putterers" may be "artsy-craftsy" but they seem to be having a whale of a good time—and we only wish Reader Stephens was having as much fun. The editorial content of CM is meant to meet the needs of the subscribers—who vary from the newly initiated hobbyist to the advanced hobbyist to the teacher to the potter. For mature material, there's O'Hara, Rebert and Berl, who, we insist, are very much in the light on the subject of

enameling; and Perkins, Bohrod, Ball, Sellers, Boynton—to mention only a few in the past year.

As for compounding one's own enamels, we're stumped; even commercially, only a few manufacturers attempt to prepare a reasonably large palette of colors. If any readers have ideas on the subject, write L.S. at *Sierre Madre*, Box 144.—Ed.

STILL O.K.

Gentlemen:

I am still very much pleased with your magazine. Recently, (LETTERS, August) I read that a gentleman had copies of CM that he would sell. My advice is to hang on: they'll be worth more yet, some day. I do not have any extras but I would not sell my first copies for any amount . . .

I am still working on a state-wide craftsmen's group for the State of Michigan (CERAM-ACTIVITIES, April). The work is slow but progressing.

G. LAWRENCE JELF
Trenton, Mich.

SOMETHING MISSING?

Gentlemen:

Please send me your 1953 back issues as advertised . . . I feel that I'm missing something by not having them . . . The information means so much when you work by yourself and use the trial-and-error method. I particularly enjoyed Lee Levy's "Cast-Ware Combinations" (August). Making one mold do the trick of several is valuable information . . .

MRS. CHET WARNER
Le Sueur, Minn.

♦ No doubt Reader Warner will be delighted to learn that the next article in Dorothy Perkins' series on plaster will be a feature on altering cast shapes.—Ed.

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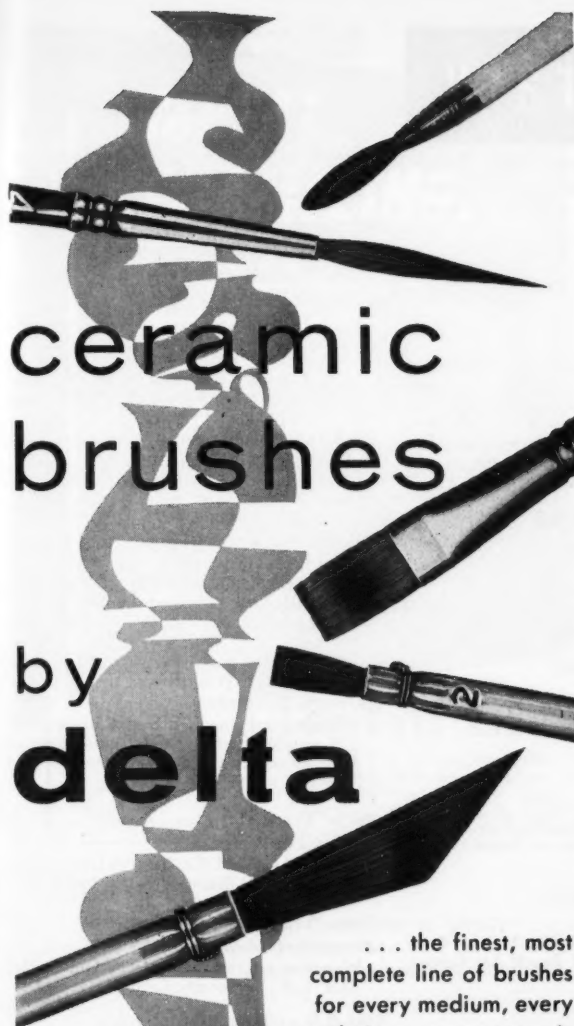
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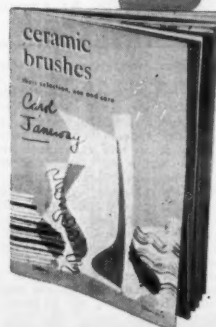
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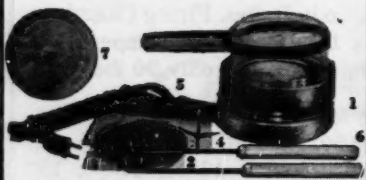
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itinerary

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WHERE TO GO

ALABAMA, Montgomery

November 9-30

Contemporary Norwegian Ceramics at Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts (show circulated by Smithsonian Institution).

CALIFORNIA, Palo Alto

November 8-29

Pre-Columbian Art; 80 examples; at Stanford University.

DELAWARE, Newark

November 9-30

American Craftsmen 1955, a traveling show circulated by Smithsonian Institution. At the University of Delaware Art Gallery.

FLORIDA, Miami Beach

November 7-23

Florida Craftsmen's Fifth Annual State Craft Show at Miami Beach Art Center.

IOWA, Des Moines

through January 8

"Dig This Iowa Clay"—display of decorative pieces and industrial products—under auspices of the Children's Museum at Des Moines Art Center.

KANSAS, Lawrence

through November 22

2nd Annual Kansas Designer-Craftsmen Exhibition at the University of Kansas.

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November 3-30

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of CERAMICS MONTHLY, published monthly at Athens, Ohio, for October 1, 1955.

1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are:

Name Address
Publisher, Professional Publications, Inc. Columbus, Ohio
Editor, Louis G. Farber Columbus, Ohio
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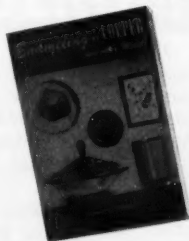
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ON ENAMELING

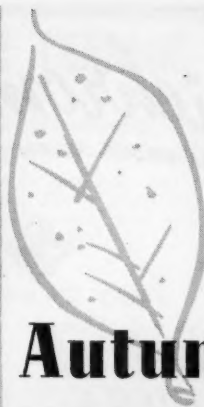
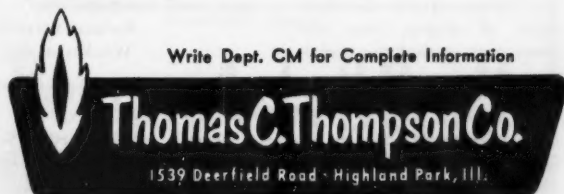
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suggestions

from our readers

OILCLOTH BATS

I use a good quality oilcloth as a "bat" for throwing on the wheel and find it to be much more convenient than either plaster bats or tiles.

The oilcloth is cut to fit the wheel head and the smooth side of the cloth is painted with thick slip and allowed to dry. The wheel head is then painted with thick slip; while it is still wet, the slip side of the oilcloth is laid down and smoothed. It sticks tenaciously — and the fabric side, which faces up, supplies an excellent base for holding the ball of clay to be thrown.

After a piece is thrown, run a wire between the cloth and wheel head and slide the pot and cloth to a board for drying.

—Mrs. R. W. Ralston
Miami Beach, Fla.

TIP FOR BALL MILLING

A coarse, household strainer is a great help in separating the pebbles from the glaze after ball milling. The larger and coarser the strainer the better. For a dry glaze, shake the pebbles vigorously in the strainer. This will usually clean them quickly and easily. For a wet mix, use a small amount of water over the pebbles after shaking thoroughly.

—Irving and Lee Levy
Levittown, L. I., N. Y.

FLOWER-CUTTER AID

A real boon to those of you who use small flower cutters is the new plastic wrapping material called *Saran Wrap*. The method is to flatten out the clay on a sheet of cloth, cover it with the *Saran Wrap* and press out the flowers through the plastic cover (the *Saran* will not be cut!). When you have cut out a whole series of shapes, turn the cover over so that the clay is

on top; a few quick pulls on each side of the *Saran* will flip the tiny shapes loose so that they may be picked up easily with a needle or pointed tool.

—Henry Salzmann
New Brunswick, N. J.

CLAY TRIMMER

Here is a quickly assembled and easily adjusted tool for marking an even-topped rim on a hand-built piece. The necessary items are an ordinary hatpin, a long ruler, and a spring-type paper clamp.

Fasten the hatpin to the ruler with the clamp at the desired height. Rest this assembly on the table while turning the pot to be marked



on a banding wheel. A perfectly horizontal scratch can be made on the pot by moving the pin assembly toward the pot until it touches.

This same idea, with a longer and perhaps sturdier pin can be used to cut the top from a pot, but be careful to take small bites, particularly if the clay is quite dry.

—Rose Migdal
Highland Park, Ill.

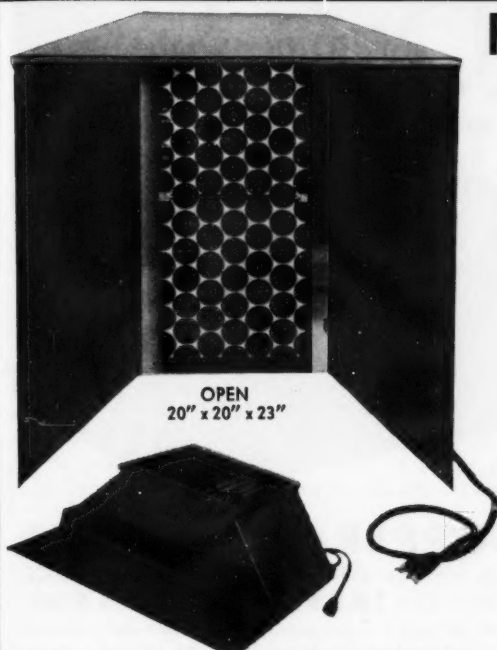
MOSAICS FROM SCRAPS

Save all copper scraps. Trim them to small pieces and enamel them, keeping each color in a separate box. Use them as tesserae for mosaics which can be used as small trays, wall hangings, etc.

—Roland Schrupp
Waukesha, Wis.

Market For Ideas

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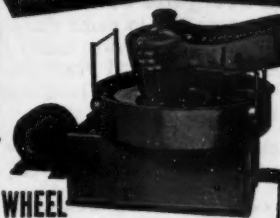
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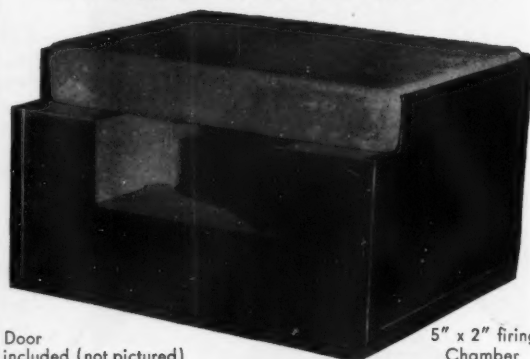
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3-D CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

Make Your Own with Copper and Enamel

by KATHE BERL

With all their color and glitter, Christmas ornaments really carry the spirit of the season and create the right atmosphere. I really love them, and I make my own out of every possible (or impossible) material.

My pet ornaments are enameled (of course) and three-dimensional. Enameling has been neglected for Christmas trimmings, I think, because the pieces are usually made flat and decorated on one side only. That does not work too well. When the ornament hangs on a string from the tree, turning and twisting, it has a tendency to show the wrong side of the picture too much of the time. That is why I started whipping up three-dimensional pieces to move and vibrate and look interesting from every angle.

I have prepared two groups of these

ornaments (see photos) as suggestions for CM readers. One group is abstract—spirals and a ball; the other more realistic with stars, an angel and a reindeer. All the pieces have been kept as simple as possible so that beginners, without having to go to the trouble of soldering or otherwise joining parts, can still achieve a sculptural effect; and the more advanced can go beyond that, developing the basic ideas into something very complex of their own.

The metalwork for these ornaments, though very simple, is the more involved part of the procedure. So I will first explain how each individual form is made, and then go on to enameling them collectively.

Out of Scraps

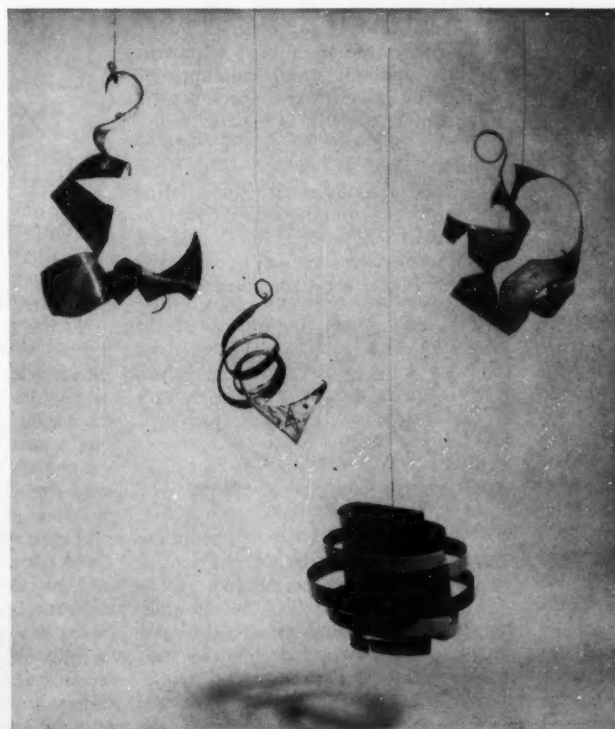
Three of the abstract pieces were made out of scrap copper that I collect in a box (it always comes in

handy). When you cut sheet metal, the scraps curl and obligingly get into the most fantastic shapes, so for two of the pieces I used scraps just as they came out of what you might as well call the trash, and I added only a twist or two to the third. For hanging these pieces, I punched a hole in the top corner of one for a string to go through, and curled the thin ends of the two other pieces into rings. That is all, except for the enameling. Anyone can have lots of fun making ornaments from scrap.

Turning Ball

For the ball, sphere, or whatever you want to call it, make a pattern out of paper and transfer it to the copper (the experienced may work directly on the metal). First, draw a circle of the size you want the ball to be, then draw a horizontal line at the top and at the bottom so that the

(Please turn the page)

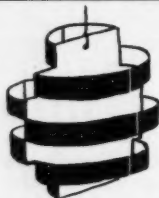
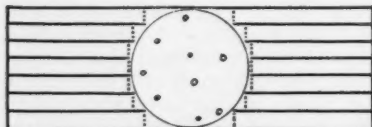


SPIRALS from scraps of copper, and an intricate-looking but simply constructed ball, may be enameled and decorated colorfully, to catch the light as they turn. (Ball pattern on next page; details about the author on p. 34, "Ceram-Activities.")

3-D CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS (cont.)

circle stands in an oblong field. At the left and right of the circle, mark a point that is equal in distance to the diameter of the circle, and at these points make a vertical line. This is your pattern.

Transfer it to the copper, using a pointed instrument for outlining so the marks won't get lost. Cut out the oblong shape; then cut the areas to the right and left of the circle into horizontal strips (or as I say, "noodles") of equal width. I made seven strips on each side, but the number depends on the size of the ball you are making. You might need more for a large ball—but be sure to cut an odd number so that you have a strip at the center. Now, flatten out



the metal with a wooden hammer (not a metal one). If you care to punch some holes through the circle as I did—light coming through a small hole makes a nice star effect—do it now, and you are ready for shaping the ball.

Start with the two center strips, bend them toward each other until the ends meet in a semicircle. If the semicircle seems too big for your taste just overlap the ends. Now take the strips above and below the center semicircle, bend them over to the other side of the circle, join and overlap the end. Proceed with the next set of strips the same way, alternating with one set of two to the front, one set to the back until finished. Shape the assorted semicircles to a nice ball and get rid of excess copper by cutting through the center where the strips overlap. The process may seem complicated, but it really isn't hard.

This ball has a fascinating life of its own. Dangling from a string, it behaves very much like a one-piece mobile; the strips seem to unite in spirals, throwing varying shadows on the flat surface in the center, and the perforations blink off and on as the ball turns perpetually.

THE SECOND GROUP of decorations—the stars, angel and deer—all can be made small enough for the Christmas tree or any size wanted.

The *starburst* and *starmobile* can be large enough to hang from the ceiling; the figurine and animal can be as tall as your kiln will allow, and when finished can stand or be hung.

Starmobile

For the starmobile, cut your star pattern with one point extended in a strip so that the pattern looks like a

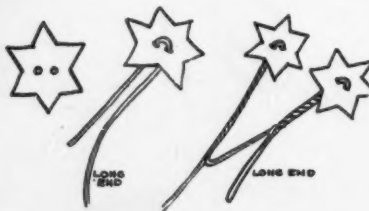


star on a stem. Dome the stars a little (to make firing easier) and with a pair of pliers curl each strip in a ring to the point of the star. Enamel the pieces. Then take a length of brass or silver wire and, with pliers, form it into a long line of loops; put a little wire ring through the curl of each star, and attach to the looped wire. Bend the wire in any direction you like; play around at balancing and you will have another pleasant decoration for the holidays.

Starburst

All you need for the very charming starburst are stars and a good long length of wire. First cut the stars out of metal; any number of them can be used. Dome them, punch or drill two holes in the center of each one (like a two-hole button), and enamel.

The stars are assembled with wire so that each star stands out approximately the same distance from a common center; the wire is twisted to give it spring and still allow the radii to vibrate. This is not at all difficult when you actually do it; no soldering or complicated joining at all. *Only one continuous length of wire is involved.* First, estimate the length of wire needed: if you want the stars to stand



out two inches from the center, for example, allow a generous four inches for each one and multiply by the total number of stars, then allow a dozen or so extra inches for hanging the starburst.

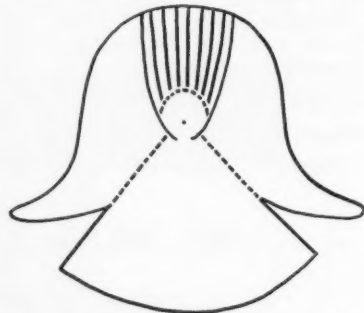
Beginning at the left end of the wire, mark off a section for the

hanger, then from this point measure off a good four-inch length. Now, put the other end of the wire up and down through the holes in the star and pull the star back to the center of the four-inch section. The wire will now look like a hairpin, with one short and one very long end, holding a star on top. Hold the two sections of wire in one hand, grasp the star in the other hand, stretch tightly and twist until you have a twisted section two inches long—this is the radius for your first star. Mark the next four inches on the wire, string another star and twist, repeating the process until all the stars are used up.

You should have a short length of wire left over; just twist it together with the length allowed at the beginning, to form the hanging stem. Distribute the stars evenly in all directions by bending or adjusting the radii at the center. Now you have an ornament that is bound to charm everybody!

One-Piece Angel

I know that you will love the little angel and I hope you will be able to develop the basic pattern successfully (see sketch). All the figures of the Nativity or any figure desired can easily be made when you acquire the



knack of transferring a flat design to a figure in the round. Just imagine the shell of a form flattened out, used as a pattern, cut out of metal and bent back into shape.

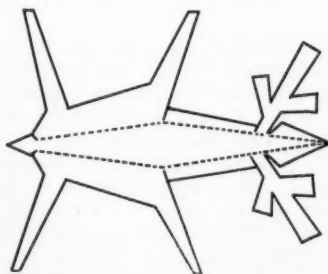
Make your angel pattern out of paper first. Draw the shape of the head, add the length of the dress and the width of the skirt on either side, measuring carefully or the angel will not stand properly. The skirt will come out as a circle segment. Now add the wings on either side. It is very convenient to have them come all the way down to the hem of the skirt to support the figure so that it cannot topple backwards if fired standing up. But if you want small wings, allow for a wider skirt to balance the weight of the wings, thus avoiding topheaviness. Elongate the outlines of the face by extending them upward, cut the space above the face into nar-

row "noodles" for hair, and your pattern is finished. Cut it out and bend to shape; alter it if necessary.

When the pattern satisfies you, transfer it to copper, cut out and flatten the metal, hammer the face round, bend the wings up on the dotted line. Close the flat skirt into a cone so that the two dotted lines meet in the back of the angel; curl the "noodles" to corkscrew curls, arrange them around face and shape the back of the head out of them. Now your darling angel is ready for enameling.

Four-Legged Animal

Making a four-legged animal—a reindeer in this case—out of a single piece of metal is an easy trick. Just imagine the poor thing skinned and the hide laid out bear-rug style! Fold



a sheet of paper in half horizontally and draw a half-pattern (so both sides will be exactly the same). The fold is really the spine of the animal, only this spine does not start from the base of the skull but reaches from the nose to the end of the tail. On the fold, mark the tip of the nose and the end of the head, add the length of the neck, the body, the tail. Allow for width along the spine (the dotted line in the sketch) and draw the side shape in outline. The beginner will get the general idea if he follows my sketch and makes the deer in paper first: just cut on the solid lines, bend on the dotted lines—and you will have a three-dimensional reindeer. Once you get acquainted with the principle involved, you will undoubtedly go on to many variations of this pattern.

Ready for Enameling

That's about all on the metal shapes—except that you can use any gauge metal you wish as long as it can be handled with ease and is not too thin for the purpose (I used 24-gauge for the deer so the legs would not fold up). Rough cutting lines and sharp points on the metal should be smoothed with a file or Carborundum stone. Acid clean the pieces, rinse, and you are ready for enameling.

You will notice that I refrained from putting much decoration on the pieces, just a few details to tip you

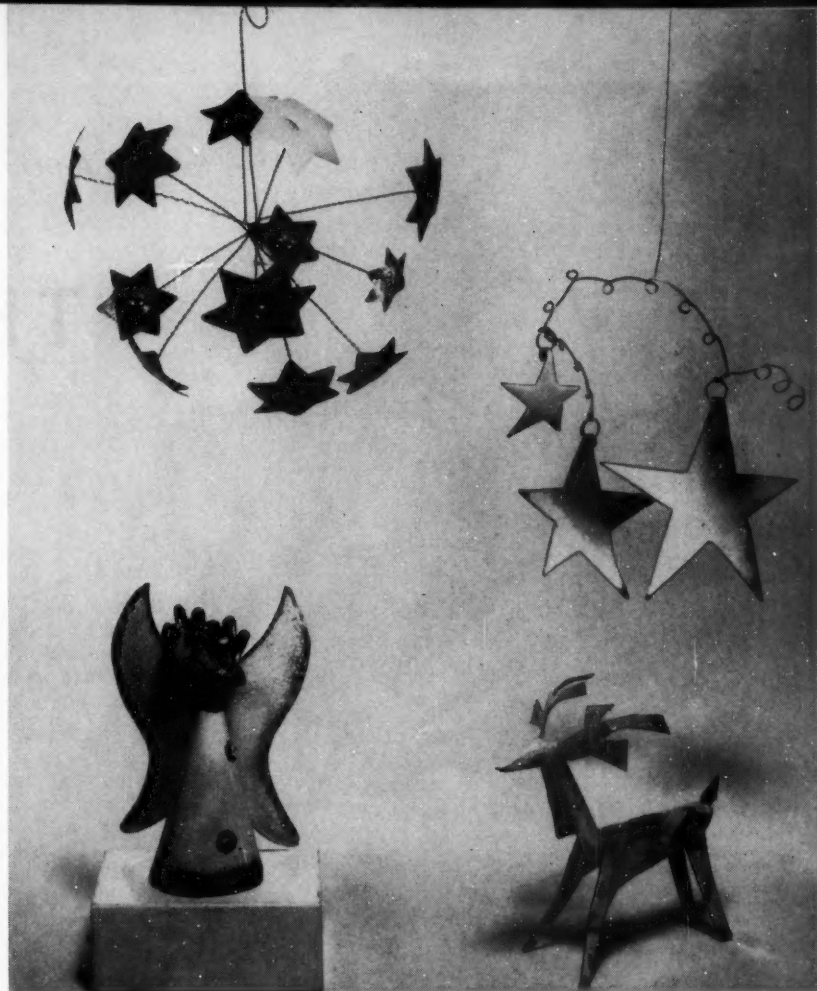
off. There is a reason: I feel that too outspoken a design can frustrate the newcomer in many respects. He thinks, *oh, that's much too complicated for me, or it's too abstract or . . .* I prefer to give the basic recipe and let you put on your own icing—that way, you will be much happier.

For a basic coat, you might use white slush, fire, and decorate in any of the techniques that Jean O'Hara and Jo Rebert have described previously in CM. Dipping the piece in enamel is quite a convenient way of applying the basic coat because it covers the entire surface inside and out. But if you don't have facilities for dipping or spraying enamels, use the sifting method. Spray the piece on all sides with gum solution, sift on a basic coat of white, or flux, or many colors—whatever you wish—and fire. Repeat the sifting-and-firing process until the piece is fully covered. In decorating further, you may want to apply intricate designs; or to cover the whole piece or small areas with foil or with tiny bits of foil. Use gold

or silver or liquid metallic lusters if you like; there is no end to the possibilities. You can add stones as I have done (it's considered unorthodox!)—just cement them on; or rhinestones—they catch the light so nicely. And when you do the ball ornament, be sure to use a different color on either side of the disc, and a different color on the inside and outside of the strips.

All of the pieces described are designed for easy firing, so that you will have no need to build complicated contraptions for support. I fired mine on a simple stainless steel rack. If the angel you make should be too tall to be fired standing up, put it on its back—the four points of the wings will make a fine support. And if you are afraid that enamel powder will drop off and ruin your rack, place a sheet of mica between it and the figure.

I can think of nothing else to add—except that when you hang your decorations, use a single twisted cord to make them dance the merrier for Christmas. ●



STAR arrangements are easily done with wire; the angel and reindeer are formed from one-piece patterns.

Third and Last Article of a Series on Human Figures

THE HUMAN

by EDRIS ECKHARDT



Photo: Cleveland Museum of Art

In modeling the human figure, differences in age and sex, attitudes and emotions can be suggested just by the relative size of the various parts of the body ("Human Relations," September). But it's movement or action that brings the figure to life—and human beings are capable of countless attitudes and positions. We have tried out some of these with standing figures ("Figuratively Speaking," October).

Today, we are going to relax and take it easy, go to the beach (in our minds, at least) where we have such a wonderful chance to study the way people sit, crouch, kneel and just plain loll. (In November, this can be a test of how well we have learned to see and feel, of how keenly we observed at the beach last summer.)

We'll go through a series of child figures, accomplishing the position in each case through *angles*—the angle of the waist, knee and groin, even the ankles, feet and hands. Angle differences in male and female movements will also be noticeable.

1. What a beautiful day! . . . This youngster lies flat on his back, head cradled on one arm, the other arm relaxed across his stomach, knee flexed



SCULPTURE by the author: Notice the casual, easy relation of clown to rearing horse in "Finale" (top); circular movement and shapes repeated in "Intermission" (1) to give unity and harmony. Creche figures, "Devotion," (facing page) suggest the range of movement and feeling that is possible in small-scale figures.

and one foot, boy-like, acrobatically inclined. You have to watch the leg that carries extra weight for it could sag a little. With a few strokes of the modeling tool, the figure can be clothed in jeans, trunks or nakedness.

2. Remember the contrast between male and female! Acquiring a tan and a little self-conscious, this girl

CERAMICS MONTHLY

Photo: Syracuse Museum

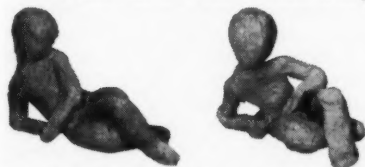


N ANGLE



(left) has *curved* movement. The arm supporting the weight mustn't be allowed to sag too short. The crossed-over leg is easy, relaxed.

Notice the difference when a boy,



(right, above), takes a position like the girl's. The action is more casual; the angular movement is forward and the head and chest shove forward.

3. Here is a position that is fun—and so easy. The child could as well be in front of the television set or the fireplace as on the beach. Notice the thrust of the chest, and the chest



weight supported by both arms (don't let those upper arms start to sag). The figure—it could be either a boy or a girl—acquires life with the turn of the head, the natural arch of the active young back, the casual crossing of feet at ankles.



4. Let's see what's down at the water's edge . . . ah, here's that crouch that all young children manage so easily. The knees are spread a bit and the hands are dropped between the legs. Observe

the spring in the legs, the relationship of buttocks to heels. (Lower legs can sag if you use too much pressure on the upper part of the body while you work.)

5. Sand feels good trickling through the fingers: the boy kneels with a slight thrusting - back movement but the head and chest come forward in perfect balance. (Take care that the upper legs do not settle and become short.) Notice in all these figures that the arm and leg bends are smooth.



not my treasures bog me down!).

7. Here is a fellow who likes to watch others (an artist, perhaps?). The "sit" is relaxed and flat, the knees spread, the back curved (never straight), the chest thrust forward. No sag problem in this one; it's an easy position to do and there are no pitfalls.



8. A child sits down, the feet crossed at the ankles: a girl might press her

knees tighter together, but a boy would not unless he was tense or uneasy for some reason. With this position, you have to watch out for the trunk — it could slump a bit if the clay was too soft.



9. Sand in the shoe wants out! So, boy-like, he puts his foot on his knee and proceeds to leave this part of the beach behind. The natural actions of human beings are the best; learn to spot them.



MOVING FROM the active life on the beach, I would make a few suggestions to help the would-be sculptor in his first attempts at modeling figures.

On handling the clay: Over-rolling and overhandling make the clay too dry and brittle; and clay that is thinned too flat will make a paper-doll figure of little substance. While working, always be sure to support the figure with an upward lift of your left hand to prevent sagging.

Bending the clay: Don't pinch it too much while bending and flattening out arms and legs, or make lazy bends that look like macaroni. Use both your hands for bending; for example, for a bend at the elbow, grasp the upper and lower arm, bend, then push both sections gently together toward the joint involved.

Figuring out the figure: remember the spine as a living, expressive element. (Please turn to Page 26)

**MADE IN
BRITAIN**

THE LEACH POTTERY AT ST. IVES

by K. L. BOYNTON

"The overall picture of British studio ceramics today is one of consistently high quality," the author said in her first report on England and Scotland (CM, September). In addition to the Leach Pottery, she will report, in subsequent issues, on others visited during her recent trip abroad.—Ed.

After a number of years as a studio potter in Japan and later in England, Bernard Leach felt the need to implement the standards of his handcraftsmanship and his artistic judgment in standardized ware, even if on a small workshop basis. This would enable him to advance his artistic purpose in several ways: first, the refinements of special and costly individual ceramics could be translated into simpler, functional pots which because of the repetitive processes of their manufacture could sell at prices within the reach of a far wider range of customers; second, he would train craftsmen in an awareness of high standards as part of their work in carrying out these reproduced designs; and finally, he felt there was an intrinsic merit in making pottery for a functional need, as it has been a natural and normal factor in the making of almost all great pottery of the past. The some 18,000 pieces of domestic ware coming annually from the Leach Pottery, St. Ives, Cornwall, are proof of his conviction that repetitive items can be beautiful, and what he has done in individual pots is well known through exhibitions and collector purchase.

The studio where Leach ware is made is a strange



SON Michael, a ceramics teacher, shares management when his father and brother are away.



BEST-KNOWN potter of the Occident, Bernard Leach, here, is just another ceramist concentrating on a decorating idea.

T H E

combination of the East and West, with the best of each culture being called upon to produce fine ceramics. Perhaps it is naturally so, for Bernard Leach was born in China, educated in England and returned to Japan where he subsequently obtained his pottery training. Many of the techniques used are Oriental, as are many glazes and colors. Certainly, the emphasis on stoneware and high-fired porcelain is. But the ware is not a copy of Oriental ceramics. The potter behind the pot makes the difference, and the complete sincerity of the Leaches is apparent in the ware itself. There's no bamboozling here, no pose, no affectation. Rather, there is balance, simplicity of line, cool richness of color, restraint in design—and how much of this is Oriental and how much plain Leach is interesting to speculate.

One of the inevitable phases of leadership is that you are called upon to pass information along to others, and the Leach Pottery is no exception. Bernard Leach recently wound up an extensive and successful lecture-and-conference tour of the United States with a visit to Japan at the invitation of his old friends, Dr. Soetsu Yanagi, Head of the National Folk Museum in Tokyo, and Shoji Hamada, the distinguished Japanese potter. David Leach, who for some years has been in active partnership with his father, is at present fulfilling a temporary appointment as pottery instructor at Loughborough College, while his younger brother Michael is in charge of pottery classes at Penzance School of Art, and also works part time at the Pottery near which he lives.

A major aim of the Pottery, during the past 15 years especially, has been to develop a sense of individual and communal responsibility, coupled with the introduction of a limited degree of profit sharing. One result of this is that in the absence of the Leaches, the members of the staff function as a team, creative work as well as standard production being well maintained. Normally, the staff consists of about ten: seven potters, one clay maker and packer, a secretary-accountant and a typist and show-room attendant. Of the potters, three are local men who came to the Pottery as boy apprentices and whose experience enables them to handle the main responsibility in the production of the standard ware, although this work is shared by the art school grads who come for limited periods of on-the-job training.

(Please turn to Page 33)

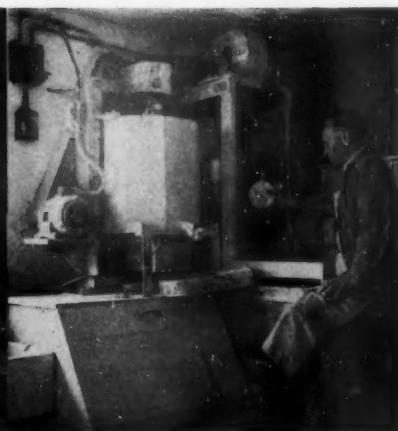
CERAMICS MONTHLY



SAMPLING of ware: brown earthenware bottle with wheel-mark texture and yellow slip decoration, and earthenware pot with high

lead glaze over dark-light slip design, are Michael's work; the wine set in soft gray-green celadon is one of David's designs.

MELDING OF EAST AND WEST



DOMESTIC (or functional) ware is entirely hand-thrown: here, Dinah Dunn throws stoneware while Bill Marshall works in porce-

lain. Clay preparation, from blunger to slurry, is in charge of Horatio Dunn (right) whose father had the job before him.



GLIMPSES of the operation: bisqued ware ready for glazing; three-chambered, Japanese-type kiln, originally wood-fired and

now converted to oil; a corner of the salesroom showing David's best-selling, stoneware coffee set in celadon glaze.

Bonnie Shows How To Make . . .

Napkin Rings

by PHIL ALLEN



Bonnie is making napkin rings for herself and friend. One is made from a slab and personalized; the other comes from a roll of clay wound like a coiled serpent. In either case, shrinkage of the clay must be allowed for in judging the size of ring needed to hold a napkin.

The slab type comes first (photos, below). Bonnie cuts a rectangle from rolled-out clay, brings the ends together and welds them firmly with slip (or water). She also works tiny coils of clay into the seam on both the inside and outside to make a smoother, stronger joining.

This ring is to be her own, and Bonnie chooses to decorate it with the initial *B*. (Here is an idea for party favors: personalized napkin rings, each with an appropriate initial or emblem!) A thin coil of clay forms the initial; when firm enough to hold its shape, it is fastened to the ring with slip as the adhesive. A little modeling with a tool or pencil point will blend it nicely with the surface

of the ring.

When the piece is dry, Bonnie paints the initial with an underglaze color that contrasts with the dark clay of the ring, then covers the entire piece with clear glaze and fires.

The serpent ring may look more intricate but it really is not. Watch Bonnie. She rolls out a long coil of clay—as round and even as she can. Then she winds the coil upward, wetting each layer of clay with slip and smoothing the inside seams as she goes.

The ridged pattern of the coil is decorative in itself so nothing is added to this ring except a speckled glaze overall.

Bonnie shows only two versions of napkin rings but the personalized touches you can get through varying the shape, decoration and glaze are without limit. A napkin ring is a very personal item—everybody wants *his* to be different.

From a Slab

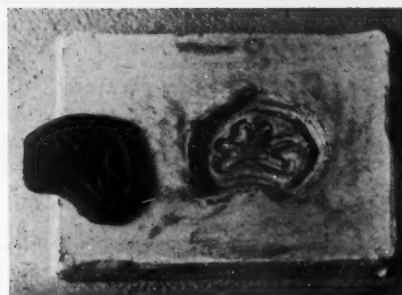


From a Coil



Adventures in Making Ceramic Jewelry...

by MARION SAWHILL



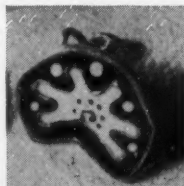
Only a couple of years ago, being a potter of the earthy-type school, I had no use at all for jewelry made of ceramic materials. As usually happens, however, when you start to explore a field about which you have been abysmally ignorant, the problems became so fascinating and the solutions so satisfying that I am now involved in jewelry-making for keeps. And I am ready to compare notes with others taking the same path.



I got started because of my interest in the work of several enamelist friends. I was appalled at the cost of the materials they used for their experiments (silver costs more than clay) and at the infinite labor involved in putting together a piece of cloisonné. I began by scratching designs in a piece of plaster with a linoleum

cutter, pressing thin layers of clay over the designs and cutting away the edges after peeling the pieces off the plaster. It was my idea that these pieces could be used as rough sketches in enameling: the pieces could be bisque-fired, the spaces filled with enamel following different design ideas, and a number of experimental sketches evolved easily and inexpensively. The idea worked out fine but there was a catch to it: the experimental pieces didn't look the least bit like enamel on metal!

But I was fascinated and hooked. Forgetting all about my enamelist friends, I took the lure and began using wet glazes spooned into the designed sections while the clay was still green. The raised lines separating the sections and all the edges would, of course, come out of the glaze fire white and unglazed; so I would paint them as well as other parts of the design with liquid bright gold. (The gold comes out shiny where it is painted on fired glaze and it looks like Roman gold where it is applied to the bisque.) For added accents, I laid tiny bits of enamel here and there to give raised dots of color, firing them on simultaneously with the gold.



I was having a wonderful time. The pieces weren't imitations of anything I had ever seen but they did combine some of the charm of metal-enamel cloisonné and of stained glass. They could be made easily, cheaply, and best of all, they sold on sight. I happily made them by the dozens!

It wasn't until some time later that I came down to earth, realizing that an attractive pat of decorated clay isn't necessarily a piece of jewelry. In jewelry,

Plaster press molds, like the one above, are used exclusively by Mrs. Sawhill to form the basic clay shapes. For additional jewelry-making ideas, see the next page.

the back of the piece is as important as the front. A piece should be so designed as to include the findings in an artistic and workable whole; the findings should be attached neatly and, in general, the back should have a finished look. I shall wade into these topics one by one, and you are invited to follow along.

Findings

Like the recipe for chicken stew that admonishes you to first catch the chicken, locating the type of findings needed used to be quite a problem. Since supply quickly follows demand, however, jewelry findings of all kinds can now be easily obtained.

The first thing to realize is that many grades of quality are available and that you must decide which is most suitable to the work at hand. For example, if you are a rank beginner, "dime-store" findings may suit your early pieces very well. If you are an experienced hobbyist making pieces for gifts or bazaar contributions, the sturdier and *slightly* more expensive varieties advertised in craft magazines (such as *CERAMICS MONTHLY*) and obtainable in most hobby-supply stores will probably serve you well. If you are an artist working in a new medium, you can obtain more expensive findings from these same sources or from jewelry-supply houses listed in local telephone directories.

In other words, don't pay \$1.25 for sterling silver wing backs if a 30-cent nickel ear screw will serve adequately. And, conversely, don't use a 5-cent clip on a \$5 pair of earrings. A Danish silversmith, mounting a bit of porcelain exactly as he would a precious stone, and a beginning hobbyist, gluing a pin fixture to a piece of bisque clay, are two different propositions!

Finally, if you are a professional ceramist producing jewelry in quantity, you had better face the fact that certain small items, like a dozen or so jump rings here and there, can mount up to ruinous sums, so buy them only in large quantities and enjoy the price saving.

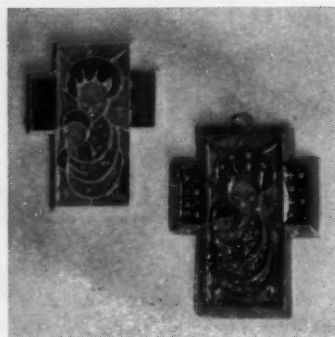
Better Backs

I suppose it was the raw, crude look of findings cemented (usually rather messily) to clay backs, plus the danger of having them part company in use, that first made me recoil from the idea of ceramic jewelry.

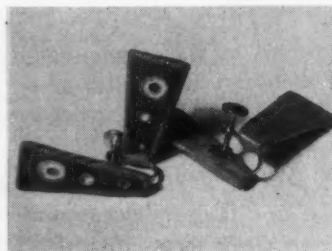
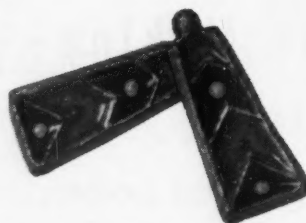
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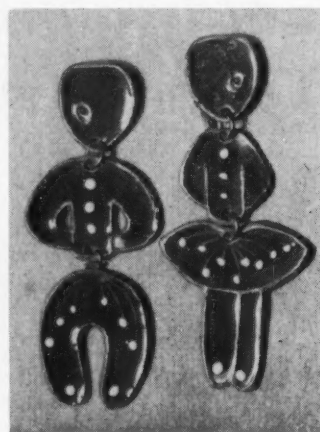
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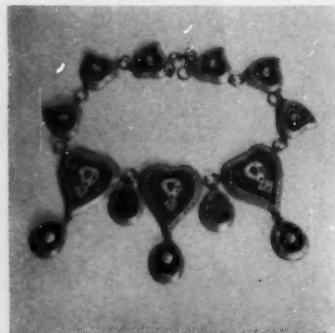
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1. Variations in the decoration and mounting, and through trimming and cutouts, can make each piece an original even though it may be one of many coming from the same press mold. The different treatments shown in these earrings and pins are only suggestions: possibilities are endless.

2. Unique design incorporates the finding and makes these "real traffic stoppers," according to Mrs. Sawhill. Sculp-Metal holds the pieces firmly. When worn, the fore part fits the front of the ear, the rear piece peeks out from behind.

3. Multi-piece jewelry (see also the clowns on preceding page) can serve as either

earrings or pins. For real conversation pieces, try the boy-girl group—one for each ear.

4. Sculp-Metal embeds silver wires to make the neat-backed "harps" at the left. In the pieces at right, each of the elements—sheet aluminum, Sculp-Metal, ceramic, and finding—is carefully considered and plays an integral part in the final designs.

5. The "bleeding-heart" necklace is visible proof that multi-piece jewelry need not be restricted to three- or four-part earrings. The fourteen-piece necklace, in brilliant red, was designed to fit snugly, but without binding or tangling.



The Overglaze Page

ON DECORATING GLASS

by ZENA HOLST

Knowing that china painters are interested in glass painting, I have mentioned in my writings that the decorating of glass is easy for them to do because the technique for the two types of painting are so very similar. Many hobbyists who know *nothing* of china painting, however, are also wanting to paint glassware. Taking each phase of technique in overglaze decoration into consideration, plus a few special rules and an explanation of the extra supplies made expressly for glass, I shall now describe the simple aspects of decorating glass so that beginners may get started with less difficulty.

Special Pigments

It must first be understood that there are decorating supplies made specifically for glass. The pigments, whether they be metals, lusters, ices, or painting colors, are prepared to mature at the low temperature of cone 022 required for firing pre-formed glass; that is, glass objects which are already shaped and ready for decorating. Such glass, whether it is lead or lime, blown or pressed, will not generally withstand a higher heat and still retain the original shape. Overfiring results in what are called "dizzy dishes."

A series of high-fire supplies which mature between 1150°F. and 1385°F. (cones 021 to 016), is also made for glass. This series is prepared for those who decorate on flat pieces of glass that are yet to be shaped. Lusters, metals, ices and the mineral colors are hand painted, screened or sprayed on the flat glass which is then placed in molds and taken through the kiln for the shaping process. This gives a

finished piece in one firing and is the process used by commercial shops which have the necessary molds and proper firing facilities for such work. High-fire supplies are not for the usual hobbyist.

Questions have come to me about the necessary tools and brushes for glass painting. Overglaze decorators may use the same ones as for china and pottery. They may also use the same mediums for preparation, and vehicles for cleaning, as indicated for each similar technique in china painting. For the beginner, who has not done any overglaze decoration, I would advise the use of the already-prepared colors for painting on glass.

Clean the Glass

Special precautions as to the cleanliness of the glass are essential. After cleaning the object with denatured alcohol, do not handle it with your bare hands but with tissue paper (rags or cleansing tissues are too linty; use rags only for cleaning brushes). The natural oil from your fingers will leave imprints on glass. When decorating an object such as a goblet where your hand must be inside to hold the glass, your hand will perspire. This moisture can be absorbed into the painting and cause unsightly spots, especially in lusters. The solution is to pack some tissue inside the glass to take up the moisture, or wrap tissue around your fingers. Old glass that has been used can contain foreign matter which will "sugar" in the firing the same as old china will show "pepper" spots. Old pieces, therefore, should be run through a light firing before decorating in order to be properly cleansed.

How to Outline

In sketching designs on glass, avoid the use of a wax pencil. If a design need be transferred, place the pattern (which is best drawn on white paper) underneath flat-surfaced crystal ware and inside rounded objects. Outline the design on the front side with India ink, which will fire out. For a permanent outline in black or any other color, mix 7 parts powdered color with 1 part sugar and add sufficient water to give a consistency of ink that

will flow easily from the outlining pen or brush. Do not use too much sugar or the color will bubble or chip. The addition of just the right amount of sugar holds the pigments together and makes for a smoother line than when water alone is used (which would also rub off easily). The advantage of the water medium is that as soon as the outlines dry any other decoration medium, if it contains oil, may be painted inside the design and up to the outlines: this eliminates one firing. Outlines of gold or any oil mixture must be fired first. When freehand work is being done, plain white paper placed for back lining of a dish will give you more freedom in laying on the color. For transferring designs to milk glass, graphite (not carbon) paper may be used. Consider using designs on only one side of such pieces as transparent bottles; otherwise, the back shows through and distracts from the front—unless it is covered with an allover pattern. The greatest difficulty in learning to paint on glass, of any kind, is in getting used to the depth or three-dimensional illusion.

Frosting and Ices

The term, "frosting," in connection with glass may be confusing to many beginners. True "frosting" is really an etching compound, sometimes called "snowflakes," which removes the glossy finish from glass; and the manufacturers give clear directions for its use. It creates a finish similar to the frost on a windowpane in cold winter. Commercial decorators *simulate* this rough finish by sandblasting. *Imitation frosting* can be obtained by the use of ices and so the term "frosting" has come to be used generally in connection with those products which give a frosted effect. But do not be misled: a so-called frosting medium (which is not the etching medium) mixed with transparent colors does not obtain a true colored frosting on glass; in fact, the effect in no way resembles frosting. If, however, the colors are painted over a piece that has been etched previously with *snowflakes*, or sandblasted, nice results can be achieved.

(Please turn to Page 31)

*A note of acknowledgement is due Mr. Frank E. Thompson of the Torrance Glass and Color Works, Torrance, Calif., who graciously reviewed this article assuring its authenticity and technical accuracy. Also, my thanks to Mr. Thompson for the privilege of visiting the Torrance Glass and Color Works. There, I was able to confirm many conclusions about decorating on glass which I had drawn from my own experiments and work.—Z.H.

A Set of Santas

by Mrs. VERNON SEELEY

A right jolly old elf with real-looking whiskers can be made with modeling clay and cotton. Beginners find this project a simple one to master, yet there is enough opportunity for originality and personal touches to please the advanced ceramist, too.

1. A rectangular block of well-wedged, white modeling clay is cut about one-third up from the bottom to form the legs. Add coils for the arms and pinch out the feet, making sure they are large enough to enable Santa to stand alone. Model the head—pulling out a point to form the hat, pinching gently to form the nose and making slight indentations for the eyes. Work the head onto the body and model the body for roundness; add a clay strip for the belt and buckle, or merely indicate it with a modeling tool; and in general give the figure its final stance.

Let the piece dry: a series of tiny holes made by running a long hat pin up through the feet or in through other inconspicuous places will help it dry without cracking.

2. Using underglazes, paint in the face (with a ruddy flesh color), the eyes, boots, and belt. Although this may be done later, I find it easier to apply the underglazes to the leather-hard clay than to the bone-dry or bisque.

Next, a good grade of cotton is cut and shaped to form the beard, mustache, eyebrows, and trimming for the hat, coat, and boots. As you shape each piece, try it on the figure.



3. Now, dip each of the cotton pieces, one at a time, into white casting slip. Make sure each is well saturated and be careful to retain the shape of the pieces.

4. Put the slip-saturated cotton pieces in position on the little figure, working the edges down carefully with a blunt tool such as a lace tool. When the slip has dried and hardened, brush on a second coat.

Be sure the entire piece is thoroughly dry before firing. Handle it very carefully for the cotton portion is extremely fragile until it is glazed. And brush the glaze on with caution. A red, brush-on glaze for the suit and cap and a clear glaze over the rest of the figure completes the job.

Santas in many positions can easily be made by this method. Interesting variations in position and accessories make each figure a personality in itself.—Seeley's Ceramic Service, Oneonta, N. Y.



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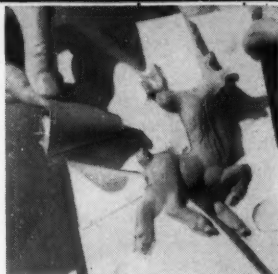


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Mold Collars Make Bells



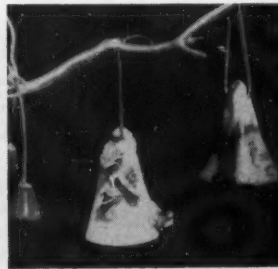
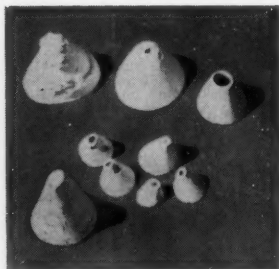
Every mold consisting of two or more pieces has a pouring hole, which is known by various names such as gate, collar, well, spare, etc. Whatever the name (I like to call it a collar), it is invariably cone-shaped—the size depending, of course, on the size of the mold. These collars are removed from the casting before or immediately after the mold is opened, and they invariably go the way of all scrap. They needn't, however: they can be put to good use!

Bells seem to evolve naturally from these collars. In fact, you need do little more than clean up the collar as you would any piece of green ware and make some arrangement so it can be suspended, and so a clapper can be inserted. Exactly how you do it will depend on your ingenuity and also on the size of the bell. For some specific details refer to the article on Christmas bells in the November, 1954 issue of CERAMICS MONTHLY.

The Christmas season automatically suggests gaily decorated, tinkling bells; however, bells large and small can be used throughout the year. They lend themselves perfectly as decorations for baby showers or wedding parties; they make pretty package decorations at any time of the year; and the tiny ones can be worn on the ends of ribbons, belts, neck bows—or even used as earrings.

In the photo above, a collar is shown being removed from a mold. Below is a variety of bells undecorated (left), completed and in use (right). How you decorate them is up to you. They can be easily completed in one fire; or you can embellish as gaily as you like with overglazes and metals in additional firings.

Whatever your preference, be sure, always, to give a second look to the mold collars you trim off, and you'll always have "bells" waiting for your decorating ideas.—Peg Townsend, Townsend's Arcraft and Hobby Shop, Tucson, Ariz.



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The Human Angle

(Begins on Page 16)

ment. Think and feel how you can arch it, how the rib cage swings on the string of the spine, how the cage swings back and forth from side to side—and how the hips, if you are agile, get around too. Make the head egg-shaped rather than round (as the beginner is apt to do), and set it on the neck at the right angle.

Detail: Be sure the figure stands securely and convincingly before adding hair and clothing. Watch out for braids and curls that are too large, fat and out-of-scale, too busy and bearing little movement in relation to the rest of the figure. The edges of clothing can be too thick or, if extended as a full skirt, too frail; buttons too large and thick. Keep drapery folds simple and in keeping with the figure movement. Keep detail in scale; see how much you can leave out and still put over your idea.

Style: Be consistent; if you start to stylize the figure, it should be an all-over job and not just in spots. Don't try to exaggerate one part and do the rest realistically.

Drying and firing: Perforate the small figure from the bottom up (where it will not show) so that it will dry and fire better with no risk of air pockets to explode during firing; in larger figures, several drain or "weep" holes may be necessary. The piercing should be done when the clay is leather-hard, and done very carefully. Use a long, sharpened wire for this job; you can make one out of a coat hanger, twisting a loop at one end for a handle and filing the other end to a three-sided point. Always give solid sculpture a long, long, slow firing: the first 1000° should take at least six hours to attain; after that, you can progress more rapidly. If you have an electric kiln, leave it on low for five hours, then on medium for two hours, then high until finished. Your work should not crack, warp or break if fired this way.

In general, beware of an excess of detail in figures: make a simple statement in clay and let the eye and imagination of the beholder finish the effect. Watch for the opportunity to repeat patterns and shapes and movement so that unity, harmony and emotional effect may be heightened (see "Intermission" page 16). If, for example, your composition is tall and narrow, see that the feeling is carried out (head, hair, nose, fingers, arms, legs, movement and color, even the costume if such is involved—all sug-

(Please turn to Page 28)

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Decorative Candle Holders



Much has been written about making and using fancy candles for decorative purposes. There are many people, however, who set them out as decorations but refuse to burn them because "they are too pretty." If that's your feeling, you will like this idea because it allows you to have your cake and eat it, too!

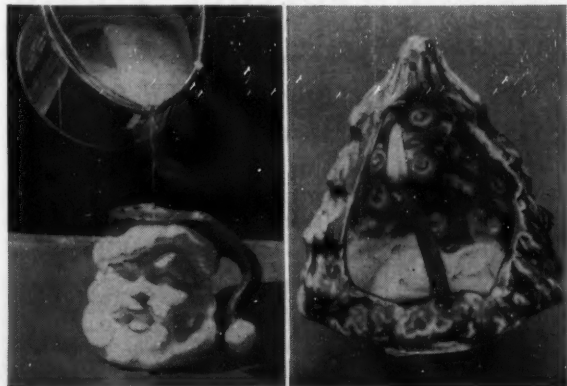
The trick is to convert a piece of gaily decorated ceramics into a candleholder. This enables you to enjoy the candlelight and still keep the decoration. There are countless ideas and approaches, two of which are shown here.

The Santa mug (see above) is a gay, decorative piece particularly useful for children's parties because it isn't easily tumbled over, and so there is little danger of fire. On this particular Santa, the face was decorated with flesh underglaze, the cheeks shaded with translucent underglaze and all flesh tones matt-glazed. Red glaze was brushed on the hat and the white areas were clear glazed. The inside was left unglazed and the entire piece once-fired.

When the piece was finished, molten paraffin (you can use melted, left-over candles, too) was poured in; when it started to stiffen, a wick was inserted and pushed to the bottom of the mug. Use wired wicking and be careful when you melt the wax, not allowing it to boil or drop into an open flame. Actually, a double boiler is the safest method, but I like to use a container I can discard (see below).

The Christmas-tree candleholder (below, right) is a cast piece originally designed as either a salt or pepper shaker. One side was cut out while the piece was still fairly soft. When dry, it was decorated and glazed inside and out. Small holes can be cut all around the tree to let the candlelight play in all directions.

If you work with cast ware, look through your supply of molds or green ware and you will surely find many pieces that will lend themselves to either of these ideas. Or, work up your own candle ideas for the Holiday season. —Peg Townsend, Townsend's Artcraft and Hobby Shop, Tucson, Ariz.



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The Human Angle

(Continued from Page 26)

gesting the tall and narrow). In other words, be very consistent in carrying out a visual image.

Clarify your thinking and feeling about a subject before you begin a sculpture; just what you are trying to portray must be clear in your mind. Try out the position of the figure yourself; watch other people in the same pose. If unusual dress or costume is called for, do a little research at the library. And if you would charge the figure with emotion, learn to know the poignant language of gesture, and facial and body expression (you may be surprised at how little you have noticed the human race!).

The way of approaching the human figure described in this series of articles is a way that children and hobbyists find easy and lots of fun. The professional artist, too, finds it an easy, creative way of doing preliminary sketches of large models for hollow-built sculpture. For finished work, the method is not practical in pieces more than twenty inches high—nor would I think of using it in connection with models for carved sculpture where the feeling is entirely different. The approach is just about foolproof, however, for pieces on a scale of from six to twelve inches high.

The all-in-one-piece aspect of the method has advantages over the add-a-bit technique. The figure is not so apt to fall apart or crack in drying and firing—which is good ceramic technique. Moreover, the all-in-one-piece method enables you to judge proportion from the start. Experimenting with movement and action is so easy that it lures you from one attempt to another in rapid succession. It's like playing with a jointed doll; you begin to try for poses and postures that would otherwise be undreamed of.

But after all's said and done, perhaps the best thing about this approach to sculptured figures is that it seems to convince even the most timid beginner that he, too, can capture the human angle in clay. ●

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answers to questions

CONDUCTED BY KEN SMITH

Q. *I have been given a large quantity of red-firing casting slip. Can I use this body for throwing?*

A. You will run into difficulty if the body has had deflocculant added because the deflocculant will make it crumbly and difficult to work. It would be helpful to know whether the slip is in liquid or dry form. If dry, it is doubtful that deflocculant has been added and all you need do is add water, wedge, and hope it will have good throwing properties.

Q. *My electric hobby kiln is in an unventilated room. I wonder if this is a health hazard because a hamster who lived in that room became ill and died.*

A. I would be inclined to think that the death of the hamster was an unhappy coincidence. It is important, however, that a room be well ventilated (particularly a small room) during the firing of a kiln. Even if there are no toxic fumes being given off (for example, from lead glazes), a small, closed room would quickly lose a high percentage of its oxygen and it would be an unhealthy atmosphere for anyone to be in for a great length of time.

Q. *If a clay body is designated cone 06-04, would it be less likely to chip if it was fired to the higher temperature?*

A. Certainly. The better matured a clay body is, the tougher it will be.

Q. *I have just constructed my own kiln and wonder if you can tell me the best way to dry it out: gallons of water were used in the construction. The kiln is a top-loader, about two feet square inside. A heavy metal box, 4" x 4" x 3", was used for the container; the inside lining is firebrick; and Sil-O-Cel, mixed with cement and water, was rammed between the firebrick and the metal shell.*

I have had kiln current on halfway for a month and steam still comes out.

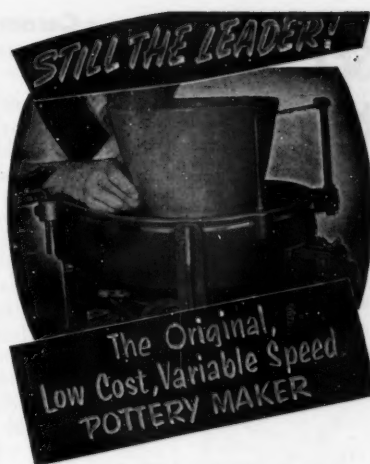
A. It won't do much good at this point to tell you you should have used another type of insulation between the metal and the brick: there are excellent dry insulators in powder, block or fiber form, which would do the trick better and which would not produce the water difficulty you are now facing.

I believe the only way you can get rid of the moisture now is through the metal shell. I would suggest drilling a series of 1/2" holes through the metal on all sides and on the bottom, too, if possible. Then, close the lid, bring the kiln up to red heat, and hold it there until all the water has been eliminated. It will take a long time.

Q. *Can you tell me who supplies bisque ware in a variety of shapes and styles? I have been able to find only plates and tiles in bisque.*

A. This is a difficult item to find because it is fragile and difficult to ship. I do not know of anyone selling bisque at retail other than the suppliers of the plates and tiles. Some of the dinnerware manufacturers would sell bisque ware in quantities; you might inquire of some of the potteries in your area.

All subscriber inquiries are given individual attention at CM; and, out of the many received, those of general interest are selected for answer in this column. Direct your inquiries to the Questions Editor; please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.



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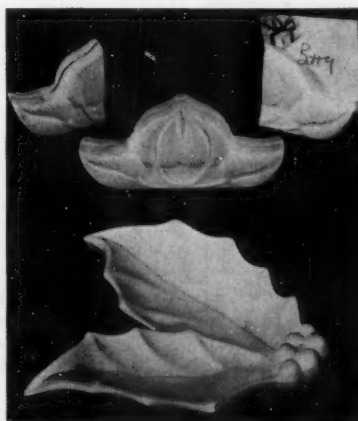
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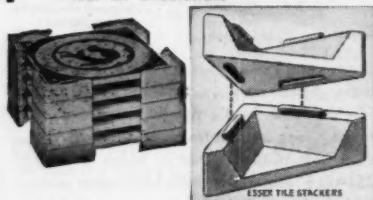
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Ceramic Jewelry

(Begins on Page 21)

The appearance of the backs, therefore, was one of the first problems I decided to tackle and it is one for which I have only recently found an answer (I think).

Of course you can glaze the backs (the way I make my jewelry, it would have been almost impossible for me); but you have to leave unglazed spots where the findings are to be attached, and they still have a glued-on look.

My first attempt at an improvement was to cover the entire unglazed back with gold. It was easily fired flat on the kiln shelf; it looked all right; and it took the cement well. But it cost too much, took too much time, and still left the lumpy, insecure look of cemented-on fixtures.

Next, I tried something that I felt was the real answer: sterling silver backs. I mounted a few pieces on sterling silver which had been cut and filed to shape, and they looked fine (in fact, they were accepted in a museum show). Neat holes can be drilled into the silver for jump rings and pendant loops, and pin stems and catches can be soldered with ease. They sold well, too; duplicates kept me busy for months.

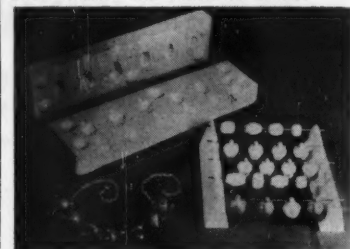
After the initial enthusiasm subsided, however, I found that I wasn't completely satisfied that silver backs were the answer to the problem. The clay pieces still had to be cemented to the silver, and although excellent cements are available, there is always the possibility that the pieces will come apart. Moreover, while complicated outlines and center cutouts are very simple in clay, they are very difficult and sometimes unsuitable in 22-gauge silver. But the major difficulty, as far as I was concerned, was the weight of the silver. The big advantage of ceramic jewelry over other types is that it is really feather-light, making it both comfortable and practical. By gluing the pieces to a heavy metal, this great advantage was lost. So, I continued to look for an easier, cheaper, and more flexible way that would suit my peculiar talents.

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(Please turn to Page 32)

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Decorating Glass

(Begins on Page 23)

Ices are prepared in various sizes of granules—fine, medium and coarse. The finest are usually used for simulating a frosted effect. The ices can be had in beautiful colors as well as in crystal; some are opaque and others transparent. In the application process, a special medium (an oil) is used to hold the granules in place. The medium is brushed on as smoothly as possible and, if necessary, is patted with a silk pad especially when an evenly frosted effect is desired. Then the ices are sprinkled, dusted or allowed to fall on the oiled areas. The surplus is shaken off and replaced in the proper bottles. When using two or more colors, allow each one to dry before applying the next; the oil sets up quickly. Clean the edges around the design and straighten bands with a bit of cotton on a toothpick. Sometimes it is necessary to use turpentine for cleaning but if the iced area is very dry, much can be scratched off with a sharp tool. Unwanted scratches or weak places inside the design, however, cannot be repaired; remove all and start over. Effective decorations can be finished in one firing when ices are being used, unless a background of luster is involved.

Not all ices mature and adhere at the same firing temperature. It is advisable to experiment with the various-sized granules until the exact temperature for best results is known. Not all sizes of ice will adhere at the same temperature: there is a variance between the finest and the coarsest grains, and between the opaque and transparent. The coarsest and the opaque need a higher temperature than the others. Not all products have the same enduring point of temperature, either; it depends on the manufacturer. Sometimes just one-half cone down in temperature will make a great deal of difference—and the ices must not be allowed to melt (re-read my firing instructions, May.) If lusters, metals or colors are to be combined with an ice decoration, these should be completed first at the generally average temperature of cone 022. The finest and transparent ices will usually adhere with cone 022 only beginning to bend. The rough finish of ices should be retained so guard against overfiring which might cause melting and running on concave or convex surfaces.

Little need be said about the use of enamels on glass because the technique is exactly the same as for decorating china and pottery, and the same mixing medium is used. The selec-

tion of enamels for glass, however, is quite limited in production at the present time. There are some old Bohemian enamels, and a few domestic, that are good for raised work and jewels. These are appropriate for decorating lime, pressed ware, either transparent or obscure, in such forms as compotes, candy dishes, bottles, etc., which are suitable for conventional designs. Flat enamelwork, however, has no advantage over the opaque colors used for glass painting.

Prepared Colors & Kits

A selection of prepared colors in liquid form is particularly recommended for the novice and for commercial work. Kits are fine for studio classes; a brush is included in each kit, and a reducing oil to be used for thinning the colors when necessary. These pigments are quite opaque and are very good for one-stroke contemporary designs. A swirling and twisting motion with a full-loaded brush gives character to the painting and a nice decoration in one firing. Lay on a good deal of color but not so heavily that it may bubble; it will dry quickly because the medium is not heavy with oil. Touches of liquid gold may be added for the second firing whether applied over the colors for relief or in the background.

(To be Concluded Next Month)



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Ceramic Jewelry

(Continued from Page 30)

almost anything — clay, metal, cardboard, screening, etc.

This material worked fine. It not only provided a covering for the backs of the pieces but it held the finding as well. But (and there always seems to be a but), it took a long time to cover the backs smoothly and, since it is difficult to file a flat surface, the effect I got was of a hammered-metal surface with too many little bumps in it to permit a high polish. With some types of earrings (see page 22), *Sculp-Metal* is the only material that can work; however, on drop earrings, for example, I still wanted something better.

A final solution eventually dawned on me: sheet aluminum. A large sheet of this do-it-yourself material (sheet, not foil) costs around \$3. It can be cut with scissors, drilled, filed, polished, or wire-brushed.

The method I use is to cut the sheet aluminum slightly larger than the ceramic piece to be mounted. The top surface is covered with *Sculp-Metal* and the clay piece pressed in place. In a few minutes the metal sets enough to hold, and the edge between the ceramic and the aluminum is filled in, filed smooth, then polished to a bright finish. The aluminum is not as handsome in its own right as silver; it does, however, make a suitable back; it is cheap, easily worked, permanent, and suitable. But best of all, my jewelry is back in the feather-weight class again.

Design

It seems to me that a discussion of jewelry-making is never complete without covering the subject of *making the jewelry work properly*. Perhaps you have never given it a thought, and if you stick to simple pendants and round earrings you will never have to. But, drop earrings must be designed to hang attractively; free forms must fit the part of the anatomy they decorate; pins shouldn't flop over like rag dolls; and a multi-piece necklace should look like something more than a bunch of things hung on a chain.

Although nothing can take the place of the trial-and-error system when it comes to the mechanics of jewelry, a few suggestions here may save you some wasted efforts.

Free-form earrings must have a left and a right. Also, any earring having a top and bottom in the design will fit better if you make a left and a right by slanting the fixture toward the cheek when you attach it.

A pin stem should be fixed in place
(Please turn to Page 36)

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The Leach Pottery

(Begins on Page 18)

There is no rigid division of labor among the potters, the jobs of throwing, glazing and kiln packing being interchanged from time to time. Nor are they restricted in the kind of pots made, each being free, once routine production has been covered, to make and fire his own designs in his own time. These are subjected to general criticism; some of the designs are put into regular production, while the more individual in character may be exhibited in the names of their makers.

Working for the most part in stoneware and porcelain, the Pottery makes its own bodies and glazes. Much of the clay comes from Dorset and Devon, in the form of ball clays which make up the basis of the stoneware body. One of these is selected for its iron content, which helps to produce a warm color in the exposed fired surfaces. A local red sand is also added to produce a certain rough-



PORCELAIN pieces are usually small such as condiment sets, jam pots, covered dishes.

ness of texture. The porcelain body contains a high proportion of ball clay which is necessary to make it reasonably throwable, and although this reduces translucency, a very hard and fairly white body is produced.

The glazes and the iron slip are used interchangeably on stoneware and porcelain; and, in fact, the two wares are fired side by side in the kiln. Glazes range from glossy black, through dark browns, rusts and soft greens and blues, as well as a white matt or oatmeal glaze that is used principally in conjunction with either an undercoat of black slip or under-glaze pigments. The two principal pigments used are iron and cobalt

bases respectively. The iron gives dark brown and rust colors and the cobalt, which is adulterated, a soft blue.

A Japanese climbing-type kiln, excellent for both oxidation and reduction, is used. It will hold about 1800 glazed and 1300 green pieces. It is made in three chambers which are fired progressively, the heat from the first passing to the next and so on. The first two chambers nearest the heat source are the hottest, and are used for glaze firing at 1300°C; the third, firing at 900°C, is used for bisque. Doorways are filled with bricks and a mortar of fireclay and waste clay to make sure that absolutely no draft reaches the ware. It takes about 24 hours to heat the chambers of this oil-fired kiln; and, since the walls are 9 inches thick, some 48 hours are required for the cooling process.

A separate and very attractive building houses the showroom, where the ware is displayed in interesting groups and against good backgrounds. Selling is done directly to the customers who come to the Pottery, or who order by mail, and Leach ware is also sold in many leading retail shops throughout the country. Orders are handled efficiently and as quickly as possible from a standard price list on domestic ware, stocks of which are kept in another separate building. Prices are modest, even on pots done by Bernard and David Leach themselves. More individual works have been fairly widely exhibited abroad (Paris, Milan, Scandinavia, United States, Japan) and both individual and standard pots are now being sent increasingly to Canada, Australia and New Zealand, where there is a keen interest in contemporary pottery.

Parallel with their teaching is the Leach openhandedness with the results of their research, typical of which are the details and formulas given in "A Potter's Book" by Bernard Leach, published in 1940 in England, but widely known in the United States. The ideal that has inspired the father throughout his career is still the basic aim of the sons, and their stand for sincerity in pottery, for honesty in craftsmanship, will continue in the years to come. ●

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TRADITION PREVAILS IN NEW ENGLAND POTTERY

The last of the New England potteries still producing handcrafted high-temperature stoneware in quantity is the **Dorchester Pottery Works** of Dorchester, Massachusetts, according to **Amelia E. MacSwiggan** of neighboring Salem. The ware—including beanpots, crocks and mugs, as well as less traditional items—is fashioned today in the same manner as ware made centuries ago. Intrigued with the unique operation, our Salem correspondent submits the following details.

The Pottery is a family affair. Built around

plidity in design and decoration is the keynote throughout Dorchester Pottery.

The ware goes through only one firing. This means that decorating and glazing must be done prior to the firing, and there is little room for error. A Bristol glaze, containing no lead and imparting a semi-gloss finish, is commonly used. Characteristic decorative effects on the pottery include a blueberry design painted in several shades of blue on a gray background, an acorn design done in the same colors, and a much favored, pinecone-and-needle motif scratched through a light brown color. Not all the decoration is representational, however, geometric patterns



Photos: The Worcester (Mass.) Telegram

Potters trained from childhood—such as Nando Ricci, shown throwing on the kick wheel

1880 by the late George Henderson, it is now owned and managed by his son, Charles W., and the latter's wife, Ethel. Her brother, Charles Hill, is responsible for most of the designing and decorating; and a sister, Lillie, also has duties at the plant.

The potters employed there are experts descended from long lines of potters. They are men who in childhood learned the craft from their parents—like Nando Ricci (see photo) who started working with clay at the age of 4. Each worker is required to serve an eight-year apprenticeship, knows all phases of potting and is adroit in the formation of stoneware.

Modern machinery and mechanical devices would enable the Dorchester potters to produce in larger quantity, but they cling determinedly to the original production methods which, they believe, enable them to retain the quaint charm which distinguishes their ware.

Bowls, casseroles, pitchers, plates and kindred objects come from the Pottery as well as crocks for industry, and traditional Boston beanpots. Toby mugs, from an original mold procured at the famous old Bennington Pottery, are also part of the line; then there is a standing order for mugs of another type—300 annually, each identified by a slight variation in the decoration on the handle—these for Radcliffe College students. Sim-

being frequently used on other items.

The kiln is a big one. About twenty-eight feet in diameter, and shaped somewhat like a Roman arch, it holds about two-and-a-half carloads of pottery. There are three firings a year, watched over personally by Mrs. Henderson. Fifteen tons of canal coal and some wood, plus three days' time, are required to bring the heat up to the necessary 2700°-3000°F. Five more days pass before the ware is taken out. The kiln door is sealed with bricks when the fire is started; these are removed, during the cooling process, one at a time and only one per hour.

Fittingly enough, the inside walls of the kiln are perfectly glazed in brown, attractively but not on purpose. The coating comes from the enormous amount of brown-glazed ware fired there during the years!

In all its phases, the Dorchester Pottery Works is open to the visitor, Miss MacSwiggan reports. The Hendersons and the potters gladly welcome interested persons who come to look into the workings and traditions of New England's last stoneware production.

MEET OUR AUTHORS:

■ **Kathe Berl**, of New York City (see page 13) started life in Vienna and reached our shores much later. Arts and crafts, in one (Please turn to Page 36)

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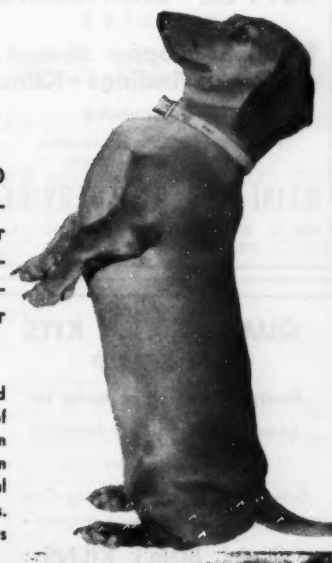
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Ceram-Activities

(Begins on Page 34)

form or another, have preoccupied her since birth, she reports. As an infant, she scrawled colors all over the floor and walls of her nursery; at three, amassed a collection of crayons, false hair, wood, nails, plaster, clay and beads that would do credit to a magpie. A full-fledged child artist at nine, she was the author and illustrator of a published book of verse for children by the time she was fourteen. But enameling came later and then, though it fascinated her, only as a hobby. Professionally, she went into stage costuming, in 1939 designing the "Fashions in Headdress" show at the British Empire Exhibition in London. As an enamelist, the shift from amateur to professional status apparently came gradually. She is today, however, one of the outstanding enamelists in America; and co-author with Mizi Otten, of a book, "The Art of Enameling; or, Enameling Can Be Fun."

"It's show season and I'm frantically busy," writes Marion Sawhill, the adventurer in ceramic jewelry (page 21). But she scrawled out a few of her vital statistics which we transcribe as follows: schools—Mather College and Cleveland Institute of Art, also California School of Art; awards—honorable mentions at Cleveland Museum of Art for pottery and ceramic sculpture; represented in permanent collections of Cleveland Museum and Walker Art Gallery in Minneapolis; residence—Cleveland; got into jewelry after a long period of mold designing, chiefly to have something finished coming out of the kiln.

Ceramic Jewelry

(Continued from Page 32)

slightly above center so the pin won't be top heavy and flop over. And you can save yourself a great deal of trouble if you always hold a pin up as it would be worn, before permanently attaching the finding, to be sure it is right side up.

A necklace must be flexible enough to curve easily around the neck and not stand out at the sides like epaulets.

One last comment. Keep the fixture well forward in your mind when designing a piece of jewelry. Wherever you can, treat the fixture so that it becomes an integrated part of the design, creating your own fixtures when possible. If you restrict your jewelry making to attaching ceramic pieces to, or dangling them from, commercial fixtures, you will be missing half the fun of jewelry-making. •

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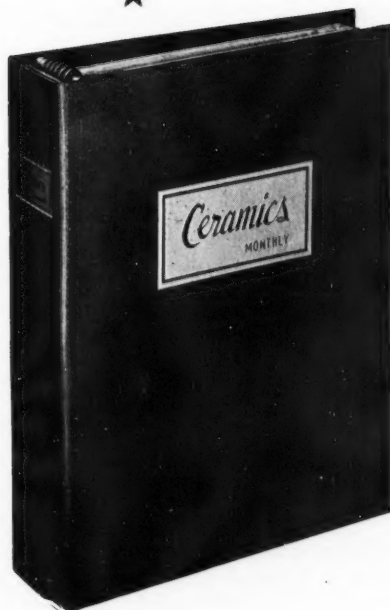
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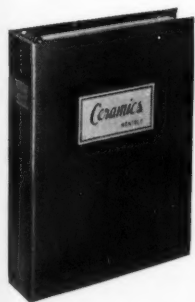
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